



# Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center

A PROJECT OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY BOARD

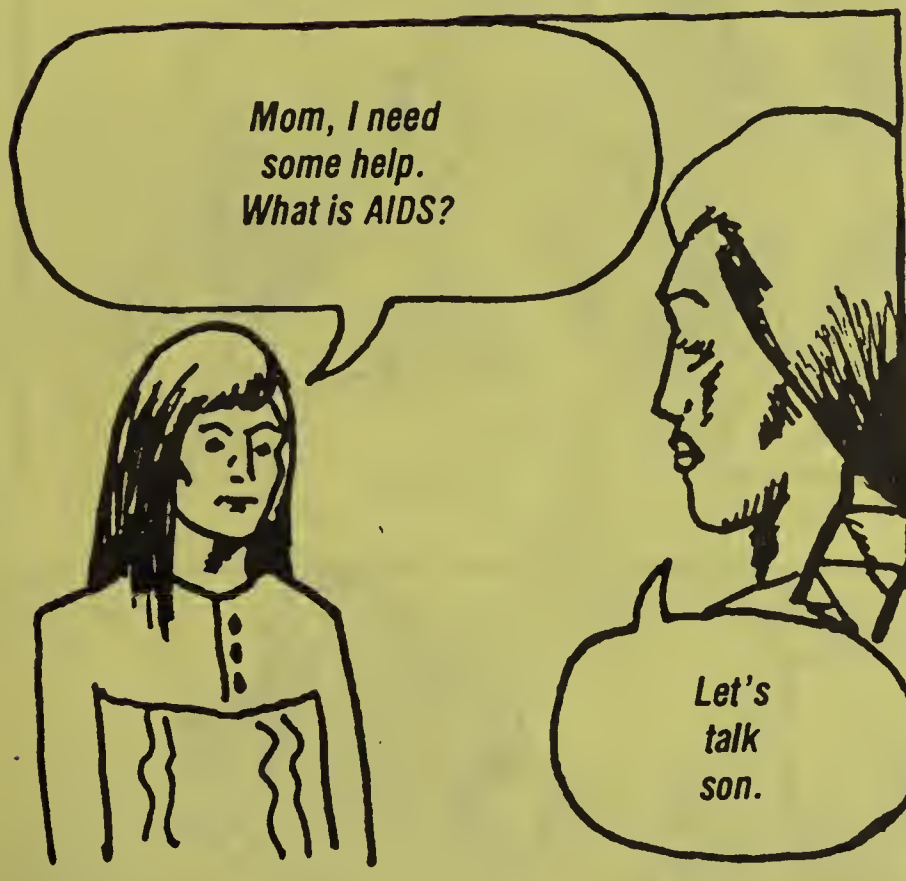
## MOM and SON CHAPTER ONE WHAT IS AIDS?

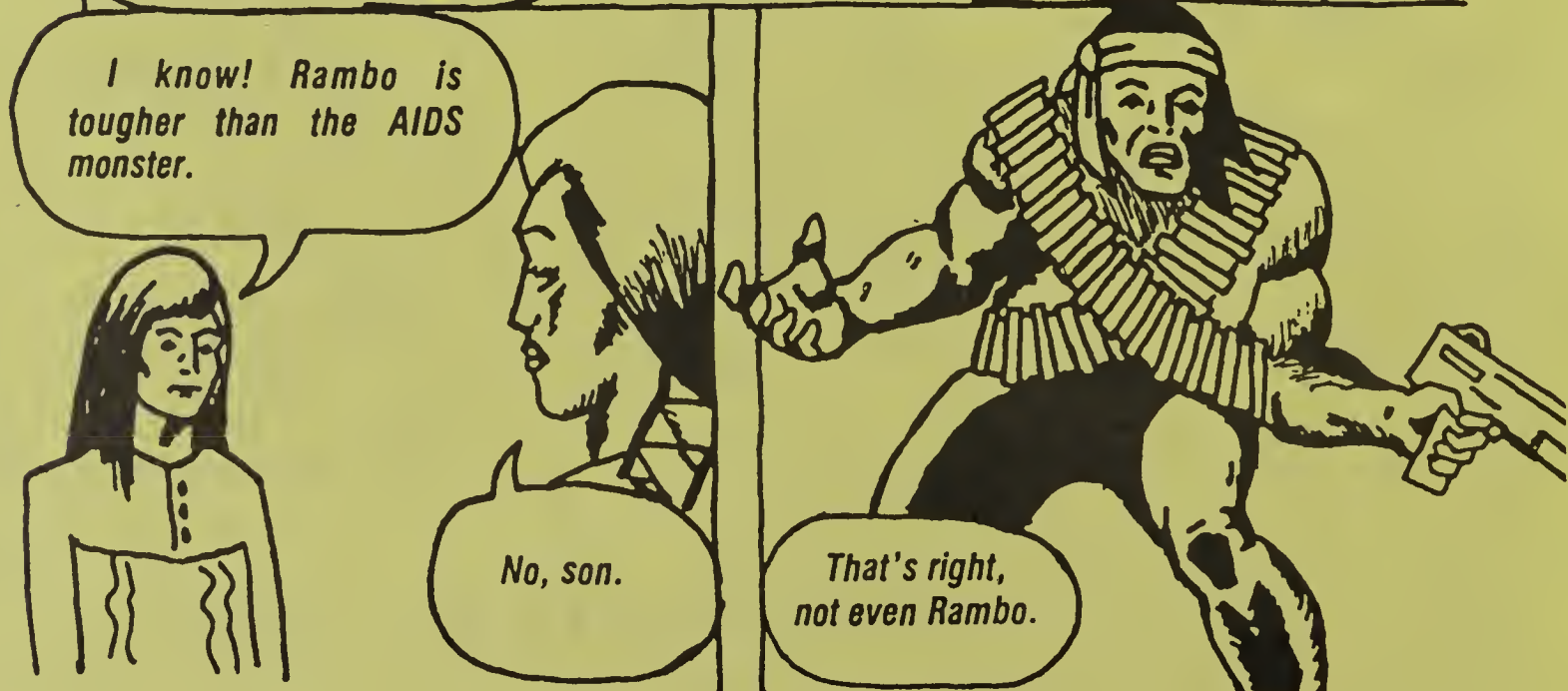
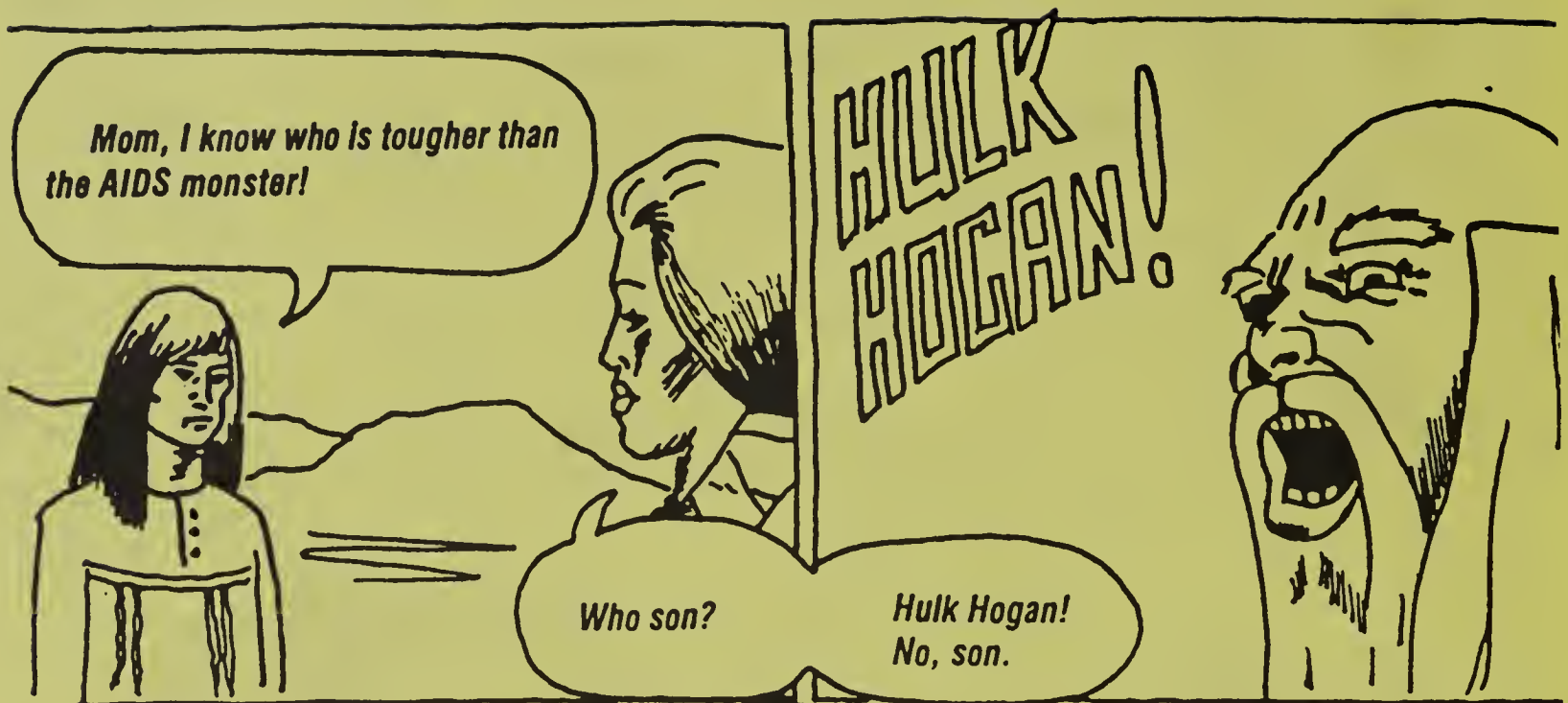
*The Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center has developed this cartoon strip to better assist you in explaining the facts about AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) to your children and students.*

*Children are also concerned about AIDS. It is important that they have correct information, presented in a way they can understand. It is important that awareness and prevention start at the earliest age possible. Only too often we adults exclude or put off sharing information about many issues with our children until we are confronted with that very issue.*

*This cartoon strip, MOM and SON, Chapter 1, "WHAT IS AIDS?" is designed for grades K-5. It will introduce some basic facts about AIDS. Chapter II, "IS JOHN GOING TO DIE?," is for grades 4-7, and Chapter III, "HOW DO PEOPLE GET AIDS?," is for grades 6-12.*

*On the back cover is additional information about AIDS, to better assist you in facilitating a discussion with the children after they have read the cartoon strip.*







Why, mom?



*Because AIDS is a virus, a germ so small you can't see it; once it gets into your blood stream you can't get it out.*

*There is no cure and soon you get sick with several different infections or diseases.*



R.I.P.



*Eventually, a person with AIDS dies.*

*John goes to my school and he has AIDS. Can I get AIDS from being John's friend?*



*No, son. You can't get AIDS from being friends with John, or from sitting next to him or playing tag, or even eating lunch with someone who has AIDS.*

*I'm glad I can't get AIDS from being John's friend!*



## What is AIDS?

AIDS was first diagnosed in the United States in 1981. It is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which impairs the body's ability to fight infections-hence the name Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

### **A** QUIRED

Refers to a disease that is not genetic, inherited or contracted from the environment.

### **I** MMUNE

Refers to the body's system of protection against any particular disease.

### **D** EFICIENCY

Refers to a gap in the body's system of protection against any particular disease.

### **S** YNDROME

Refers to a set of symptoms which occur together.

## How do you get AIDS?

### You Can Get AIDS Through Sexual Contact

AIDS can be transmitted from person to person through sexual contact. If you're a sexually active man or woman, you may become infected with the virus and infect others, even if you have no symptoms.

### IV (Intravenous) Drug Users Can Get AIDS

AIDS can also be spread by sharing infected needles or syringes. That's why people who use injected drugs are at great risk of being exposed to the HIV and may infect others. That includes intravenous drug users and syringes.

### Babies Can Get AIDS

The virus may be passed on from a pregnant woman to her unborn baby during pregnancy or during delivery.

The virus may be passed on to a baby in mother's milk. Mothers who suspect that they may have been exposed to the HIV should not breast feed their babies.

### What About Blood Transfusions?

Before 1985 some people received blood transfusions that contained the virus. That same year a test was developed to find out if blood and blood products to be used in transfusions had been exposed to the HIV. Today, there is no need to fear receiving a blood transfusion in the United States.

## You can't get AIDS this way.

### Love And Friendship Do Not Spread AIDS

You can't get AIDS from kissing, hugging, shaking hands, or touching loved ones, sharing cigarettes or using the same drinking glasses, cups, forks, spoons or dishes. The HIV is not spread by sneezing or coughing.

### Nothing Around You Can Spread AIDS

You can't get AIDS from:

- ✓ Mosquito bites,
- ✓ Touching door knobs,
- ✓ Using telephones, toilet seats or swimming pools.

### None Of These Things Put You At Risk

You don't have to live in fear. You just have to learn to avoid the risks that present a real danger.

For more information contact:

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